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2002HANOI01780 - UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	OIGO-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/007W	

-----CB2E9E 151058Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7031  
INFO AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS HANOI 001780

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

FOR EAP/BCLTV

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [VM](#) [DPOL](#)  
SUBJECT: 11TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OPENING

REF: A. HANOI 1760 B. HANOI 1432

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1. (U) SUMMARY. THE NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL BEGIN MEETING ON JULY 17, BUT HAS YET NOT SCHEDULED THE VOTES ON THE NEW GVN AND NA LEADERSHIP (REF A). THE NEW NA IS NOT EXPECTED TO PASS ANY NEW LEGISLATION AT THIS INITIAL SESSION OTHER THAN THE BUDGET. IT REMAINS POSSIBLE THAT THERE ARE CONTINUED DISAGREEMENTS OVER SENIOR LEADERSHIP SLOTS. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) IN A MEETING WITH POL/C ON JULY 15, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (ONA) PHAN THANH SON CONFIRMED THAT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 11TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL CONVENE ON JULY 17, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A FORMAL OPENING (TO WHICH THE AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN INVITED) ON JULY 19TH. THE FIRST TWO DAYS WILL BE SPENT MOSTLY ON PROCEDURAL ISSUES, ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT GIVEN THAT 348 OF THE 498 DELEGATES ARE NEWCOMERS (REF B). ONA HAS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL DELEGATES VOLUMINOUS MATERIALS ON NA PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES ON WHICH THE DELEGATES CAN BONE UP PRIOR TO THE OPENING, SON ADDED, WHILE ADMITTING THAT THERE WAS NO TRUE TRAINING OFFERED TO THE NEW DELEGATES.

3. (U) THE FIRST NA SESSION IS SCHEDULED TO LAST UNTIL ABOUT AUGUST 10, SON NOTED. ITS MAJOR ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE THE ELECTION OF A NEW LEADERSHIP SLATE, STARTING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE SRV, FOLLOWED BY THE PRIME MINISTER, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS, AND THEN THE CABINET MINISTERS, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HEADS OF OTHER MAJOR GVN ORGANS, THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE, AND FINALLY, HEADS OF THE MAJOR NA COMMITTEES. THE NEW STANDING COMMITTEE WILL MAKE THE FINAL

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DECISIONS ON WHICH 125 DELEGATES WILL BE APPOINTED AS "FULL-TIME" MEMBERS. SON SAID THAT THEY WOULD BE CANVASSED FIRST AS TO THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THIS JOB (WHICH WILL IN ALMOST ALL CASES INVOLVE EARLY RETIREMENT FROM OTHER PARTY OR GOVERNMENTAL JOBS), AND ADMITTED THAT SOME MAY VERY WELL DECLINE THE HONOR FOR FAMILY OR OTHER REASONS.

4. (U) (SBU) SON DECLINED TO PREDICT EXACTLY WHEN THESE PERSONNEL "ELECTIONS" BY THE NA WILL TAKE PLACE, AND CLAIMED THAT THE SIXTH PARTY PLENUM HAD NOT YET FINALIZED ITS DECISIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE SLOTS. (SEPARATELY, A CPV OFFICIAL CONFIRMED TO POL/C ON JULY 15 THAT THE PLENUM HAD ENDED JULY 15 AS PLANNED, BUT WAS UNABLE TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION AS TO THE PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS REACHED BY THE PLENUM.) SON REFUSED EVEN TO PREDICT THAT THE PERSONNEL VOTES MIGHT TAKE PLACE DURING THE WEEK OF JULY 22, NOTING THE NEED FOR THE NEW NA TO HEAR A NUMBER OF REPORTS FROM THE

PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS ABOUT THEIR WORK OVER THE PREVIOUS FIVE YEARS AND PLANS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

15. (U) (SBU) SON INDICATED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE COULD BE COMPETITION ESPECIALLY OVER THE JOBS OF PRIME MINISTER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (SUGGESTING - - SOMEWHAT IMPROBABLY -- THAT THE PARTY AND STANDING COMMITTEE MIGHT NOMINATE DIFFERENT CANDIDATES), OR AT LEAST THAT THE INCUMBENTS MIGHT NOT BE RE-ELECTED (REF A). HE DECLINED, HOWEVER, TO OFFER ANY PERSONAL OPINIONS ON THIS PROCESS OR ITS OUTCOME.

16. (U) SON CONFIRMED THAT THE ONLY LEGISLATION THAT WILL UNCLASSIFIED

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BE CONSIDERED AT THIS INITIAL SESSION WOULD BE THE NATIONAL BUDGET. HE SPECIFICALLY RESPONDED THAT NO BTA-RELATED LEGISLATION WILL BE INTRODUCED FOR CONSIDERATION. THE NA WILL CONVENE AGAIN IN OCTOBER FOR NORMAL LEGISLATIVE DUTIES, HE NOTED.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: WHILE WE CONTINUE TO EXPECT THAT THE PARTY WILL CONTROL THE PERSONNEL PROCESS AND THAT THE NA WILL CONFIRM THE PARTY'S CHOICES, IT APPEARS INCREASINGLY LIKELY THAT THE BACKSTAGE DISCUSSIONS OVER LEADERSHIP CHOICES HAVE BEEN LIVELY AND PERHAPS CONTROVERSIAL. WE DO NOT EXPECT MUCH OF A TRUE DEBATE OVER NOMINATIONS WITHIN THE NA, BUT ITS RATIFICATION PROCESS MAY NOT BE AS AUTOMATIC AS BEEN THE CASE IN SOME PREVIOUS NA SESSIONS. THE DEBATE MAY IN ANY EVENT OFFER AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AT LEAST OBLIQUE CRITICISM OF SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE PUBLIC SECURITY MINISTRY, ALLEGED TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE NAM CAM CORRUPTION CASE.  
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